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ABSTRACT

Three types of journal writing used by a teacher in her community college English classrooms are (1) the reading journal, in which students respond to course materials that they have been assigned: (2) the "sensorium," a writing unit devoted to detailed, specific descriptions of what the student sees, hears, touches, tastes, and smells: and (3) the journal with a specific focus, in which students respond to outside readings and in-class discussions that are of particular interest and that can serve as source material for a class project or final paper on the topic. Analysis of student work with these three types of journal writing reveals 12 ways in which journal writing acts as a self-discovery tool, including creating an openness about ideas, encouraging exploration, finding a "natural voice," serving as positive reinforcement, building confidence in self-expression, providing a permanent record of improvement, identifying preferences and desires, synthesizing school work with life experiences, and helping to develop a complete composing process. (RL)

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SELF-DISCOVERY THROUGH JOURNAL WRITING

by

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ABSTRACT

This threefold report described several types of journal writing used in community college composition classes; identified twelve facets that characterize students' personal discovery through journals; and analyzed the content of journal entries in one class. The twelve facets, derived from a survey of classroom practices in journal writing, provided the perspectives used in analyzing the student journals. Though all students did not evince personal discovery in the twelve categories, responses indicated that each student had increased his/her self-awareness and personal insights.

Presented at the Thirty-first Annual Meeting of the

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Paper Presented at the 31st Annual Conference on College Composition and Communication, 13-15 March, 1980 Washington, D.C., by
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Self-Discovery Through Journal Writing

Journal writing for most students will prove self-fulfilling in aiding them to advance, not all at the same rate nor to the same extent, toward self-awareness and writing improvement.

For centuries, philosophers, artists, practitioners, home-makers from various cultures (Greek, Japanese, medieval-European, early American and early moderns) have established and continued the tradition of keeping journals, diaries, logs, letters and notebooks. In the New World Puritan ministers, women of the American Revolution, free Negroes in the Slave Era, the philosophical Quakers, the renowned transcendentalists Emerson and Thoreau and countless others like Frederick Douglass have left a rich legacy for us to enjoy.

Irrespective of age, class, profession, or career interest, women and men, boys and girls have recorded their feelings, reflections, views, and dreams.

What appears above covers some introductory remarks to the various journal writing projects the instructor has assigned in several English courses. Usually, however, the assignments have emphasized a particular focus. (See Appendix A)

In turn, this paper will describe three types of journals used over several years: (1) the Reading Journal, (2) the Sensorium, (3) the Journal with a focus pursuing an interest discovered early in the term.

The Reading Journal. As an instrument that leads to self-knowledge, the "Reading Journal" helps both the non-traditional student and the more capable student to advance with confidence toward self-fulfillment and writing competence. The journal also helps the instructor become better acquainted with each person's interests, attitudes toward self, attitudes toward writing, his or her customary expressive forms, basic writing skills and response/reaction patterns. Like journal writing in a film, literature, or communications course, the reading journal in a composition class emphasizes the student's responses, reflections, interpretations to course materials that have been assigned to be read, viewed, or listened to or whatever materials each student has selected as a source. In defining the journal for a communication classroom, De Wine indicates that the instructor "may include both structured and unstructured writing assignments...reflecting" each student's "attitudes, feelings, and the expansion of his/her cognitive learning as the course progresses." (1977)

After distributing the assignment sheet, the instructor invited questions about what reading choices students have. Usually students are not convinced that they really have options. "Give examples," they say. To respond, the instructor suggests any of the following: "If you are a sports buff, you may read accounts of sports events. If a music lover or an artist, you may prepare entries responding to a special feature on music or art in a newspaper or magazine. General accounts or editorials are likewise suitable. For the more practical student, she/he may choose chapter readings for another class as in psychology, sociology, business, law enforcement, anthropology and others. Students who seldom ask what would be suitable reading are the prolific readers and older persons.

Although some students may have had journal writing in high school, they are still uncertain about the written format expected--how an entry should appear on the journal page. Since reading choices are wide-ranging, students are urged to prepare a brief heading for each entry, giving: (see Appendix A), date (the entry was prepared), title of reading selection, author, source (title of newspaper, magazine, book, anthology, novel or other), publication date, and specific pages read. This information introduces the instructor to the subject areas that interest each student and probably indicates the kinds of reading materials that are readily accessible to the student. Later when examining the instructor's evaluative comments, one may note the value of this type heading, since students do not have a list of common readings.

To encourage spontaneous responses and feelings as well as a conversational tone, the instructor reads brief excerpts from writing like Lorraine Hansberry's To be Young, Gifted and Black, James Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son," Thoreau's Journals, Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl, and other appropriate passages from literature. Although these excerpts do not demonstrate the writer's response to reading, these writers have shown how they interact with their experience, thus creating a dialogue with the self.

In the "tag" (see Appendix A) that follows the summary passage, the journal offers another dimension. How often has the reader wished to engage the author by asking questions concerning the written word? Students are urged to include in their closing comments questions they would like to ask the author if they could converse, or critical comments. For each student the closing comments become the main element in the journal

entry revealing the student's thoughts, feelings, reflections, values, concerns.

The Sensorium. As an instrument to assist in sharpening the student's perception that would improve skills in using specific language, the instructor has developed a writing unit called the "Sensorium." Specifically we (teacher with students) developed journals devoted to sensory appeal for five weeks, concentrating each week on a different sense: seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling. The instructor selected this order, proceeding from the most used or assumed to be highly developed area to the least developed sense. Samuelson in her study delineates three core problems of several difficulties facing both creative writing and composition students, one being "the inability or unwillingness to adjust the focus of examination to deal with the specific." ("The Meeting Ground of Creative Writing and Composition" 1977)

During the first week, devoted to seeing, the instructor secured short films, filmstrips, paintings, posters, and oversized advertising copy to stimulate the students' seeing sense. Each session the instructor encouraged students to observe for fifteen minutes, then practice writing for the remainder of the class time. Since the class met three times per week, students were urged to select a situation out-of-class that would appeal mainly to one sense. Having written five short practice pieces during the week, students were to choose a favorite scenic spot at home or take a short field trip to a site that would mainly appeal to seeing.

During succeeding weeks we followed a similar routine with variations as the sense appeal focus changed.

This type journal writing transforms writing anxiety which some students

experience into writing expectancy that produces, in turn, self-confidence in expression and self-awareness that will evolve through sharpened perception. "Journals are places to create, experiment, write, jot, make mistakes and revise," explains Carroll in her article titled "The Written Word Is Not Dead." She further argues that "Discovery is the beginning of creativeness." (p. 63)

The Journal with a Specific Focus. Near the end of the Composition I course, the instructor assigns a paper for an intensive examination of the student's subject choice before composing the paper, not a term paper or a research paper but one requiring a careful examination of materials and experience. It is assumed that from the journal prepared during the early weeks, the student will have discovered through a casual encounter a topic that she/he would wish to re-examine by reading more serious writing in journals, or special reports; interviewing an area specialist, or by attending special lectures and seminars; or by viewing a television documentary. Thus, through reading, listening, observing and reflecting, the student prepares a short journal of seven or more entries that will be source materials for the final paper. In this journal the student utilizes similar techniques developed in previous writing; however, she/he is reacting to various types of experience, not just printed sources and thus has considerable freedom to develop each entry without constraints. This type journal resembles somewhat the process that Esch has defined as a "liberating activity" (1975), except that the Esch study involved journal writing in a sophomore survey course responding to outside readings and in-class discussion correlated with the prescribed literature to be studied (see also Kay 1977).

A Self-Discovery Tool with Twelve Facets.[1]

I. Involves openness about ideas, feelings, experiences

Since writing is a highly personal process involving the identity quest, journal writing adds in-depth dimension to the personal because this type writing begins with the writer. This is not to be contradictory. Even though the composition student when preparing a reading journal must choose reading materials, he/she initiates and controls reading choices and preferences. Then at the writing instant, the student shapes an entry responding to her/his perspectives, views, values, concerns. As the reader-writer, the student scans materials extending and broadening the reading range before choosing a specific article or printed passage. Thus, inevitably he/she is introduced to various topics, ideas, issues, confronting multiple perspectives and diverse dimensions.

Journal #1[2]

A

9/20/'79 A--commented about the New England war veterans who demonstrated against anti-war activists Jane Fonda and husband from appearing before college students.

A: I thought the article interesting because just last week in my economics class I voted for Fonda to speak at Meramec.

[1]Categories used in forming the twelve facets were derived from survey data of journal writing in English classes at the St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, Forest Park, and Meramec by Evelyn Hoard Roberts (1980), unpublished report.

[2]Using a set of journals from one composition class, the instructor numbered the entire set, then selected, by randomization, the journals to be excerpted for illustrative data covering the twelve self-discovery facets. Excerpts represent unedited student entries.

Symbols are as follows: Journal Number, e.g. #1. Letter replaces student name, e. g., A. Specific date student made entry, e. g., 9/20/'79.

9/21/79 If everyone would let the marijuana smokers smoke and the non-smokers minded their own business, there would probably be more criminals in jail than on the streets.

.../ A's questions / But what about cigarettes?... alcohol?
...I'm sure, if they let marijuana smokers do their thing, pot would just pass on like any other fad.

Here A has expressed his attitude concerning "The Medical View" that had explained the dangers of pot-smoking.

Whether the instructor or a peer, reading the journal agrees with the student's views is unimportant; it is essential to note a genuine personal openness. Also, it is essential to note that A in the critical tag poses some profound questions "But what about cigarettes? ... alcohol?"

A ends on a philosophical note, "I'm sure, if they let marijuana smokers 'do their thing,' pot would just pass on like any other fad."

/ This, too, will pass. /

II. Encourages exploration

Journal #6

/ F did not date her entries as she wrote them. /

F reviewed two works for her first and second entry--Salinger's Catcher in the Rye, Plath's The Belljar.

In Entry 3, F responded to "The FBI vs Jean Seberg".

F records:

Misjudgement of people in the United States has been a big problem for many years;...

After the death later it came out that she / Seberg / was psychotic. A very far-out case of misjudgement on our governments part.

Entry concerns an article about Pope John Paul II's scheduled visit to Iowa.

Entry 5 F comments about another novel titled Doloris by

Jaqueline Susann.

F begins:

> Doloris is a fast reading novel about the life of the Ex-First Lady, Jacqueline Kennedy....
>
> After years go on Doloris changes, she grows up and finds her own identity not only as a wife and mother but as a woman.

Entry 6 another novel

Entry 7 article about George Burns

F comments:

> In America or in that fact all over the world older people are almost all the time sent away to old folks homes or institutions to die; and Burns has proven that truth to be wrong. He feels now he's at his strongest point. The man's a great influence on all of us, to have something to look forward to as the years go on. Happy to be alive.

F's remaining entries cover diverse subjects and materials.

F's final entries cover some innovative aspects of living.

Entry 13 F writes:

> Therapy, now a days has some new techniques and one of them is ?s nude sessions....

F concludes:

> Nude sessions help a lot of people and others it doesn't help, but for the ones it does help it's well worth it.

Entry 14 concerns the marriage ritual.

F begins:

> When most of us think of weddings we think of a marriage in a church or under the sight of God, but now a days a wedding can be almost anywhere.

F ends:

> It's time for a change from the older ways to a newer more beautiful age of life, love and togetherness.

/ Quite obviously F has used her journal to explore her own feelings

while seeking some vicarious experiences. A non traditionalist herself, she explained in a conference, that she had attended a small private school that provided classrooms without walls. Her parents had wanted her imagination stimulated through a less formal curriculum.

Though F completed and submitted her journal weeks later than any others, she was permitted to probe her own feelings at her own pace. Her ending comments imply that she, too, like personalities in her fiction and nonfiction reading, is searching for an identity.

Composing personal responses to the reading selections strengthens the student's ability to explore, share, and compare experience with the author. And, when exchanging journals with peers who will read them, each student benefits from the interchange simultaneously knowing and discovering. "The journal may be a means of encouraging exploration," Kay advises, "as well as a means by which the teacher begins to know the students as people." (1977, p. 4)

III. Helps find "natural voice"

Journal #25

Sifting through issues is what C enjoys. Several entries pinpoint controversy that he effectively discusses still remaining succinct. In his journal, he has identified several topics from which to choose for later papers. Each entry delineates some pros and cons on the issue. For C this seems to be his natural voice.

e.g. 9/9/'79 "Three Mile Island" and the future of nuclear power;

9/10/'79 "The Repeal of Blue Laws in Missouri" (banning Sunday sales);

9/13/'79 "Relocation of Child Care Center at-----"

/ Conservation and ecology are powerful issues that permit students to voice concerns reasoning through pros and cons. C apparently appreciates this advantage, for he clarifies his thinking and finds his "natural voice" as well. /

9/6/'79 "In America's long list of shortages, there is one shortage which could be a killer..." If man does not stop, think, use judgment; if he cannot take the time or spend some money; if he will not acquire new lands for endangered animals, the result is inevitable destruction of such animals. Is it fair, not to set aside the land now, or use the land selfishly now--regret later?"

Journal #10

J had no apparent difficulty forming reader-response introductory sentences.

She writes:

9/2/'79 "Mary Daly's article... is very explicit. She gives the legal, moral and financial aspects of putting handicapped children in public school classrooms..

... It was informative but also drawn out. In my opinion, Daly wrote too much on the legal and financial aspects and not enough on the moral problems of mainstreaming.

/ Evaluator: "Interesting critical comments" /

9/4/'79 J begins this entry relating her reading to a writing concept studied in class.

J records:

Nancy Shapiro, discussing her daughter Jennifer, writes with much emotion and uses the concept 'let the reader share your experiences.'

J closes:

"Although this is a tragic story, I enjoyed reading it.... After going through the years with Mr. and Mrs. Shapiro,

I also feel the hope they have that Jennifer will lead a normal life."

9/13/'79 J expresses disappointment concerning the article:

I feel this could be a better article if a substantial ending were given. How can the reader make a decision on the topic if the author can't?

/ Evaluator's comment: Have you considered that a writer structures intentional indecisiveness or ambiguity so that the reader may draw a personal conclusion? /

Here J suggests a reader's problem that she may experiment with as a writing technique in a later paper.

IV. Serves as positive reinforcement

Journal #3

C in several entries identifies his values, philosophical views, and realistic assessment of perennial issues.

Responding to an article about civilians who were fleeing from Iran, C writes:

9/6 The most important part of living is freedom and the choices of freedom that we can make.

To close, C observes:

Leaving the only home you've known all your life is not simple, but neither is living in total dictatorship. If you can't have your cake and eat it too... don't take the cake, leave it.

9/9 To introduce the summary, C uses a metaphor that dramatizes his distinctions.

A shark kills for food through instinct, but people kill for shear enjoyment.

C's closing tag:

> The death penalty has been in question a long time now. Isn't it about time to define whether it is truly constitutional or not? Or, do we just sit around and watch crimes of this caliber occur as often as they do?

Often the evaluator chooses not to comment. For this one, I merely checked the page, indicating that I had read his entry (I explain clearly to the students that a check neither affirms nor negates their viewpoints.) C's entry is so incisive that a comment acknowledging concurrence would be superfluous. He is a student who in composing his journal entries has articulated verities that provide their own reinforcement.

9/8/'79 About Education

> State and local agencies are always battling each other on who has jurisdiction over the other.

Later he refers to the proposal to separate the education department from H & W. For critical comments C records:

> I think that / H E W / should be handled separately, H and W do not coincide with each other, just keep the guidelines and regulations unchanged.

Journal #7

G responds to a story involving choices.

9/15/'79 The car is given up, but the loss is really a gain in sound heart and mind. The road to happiness is full of obsticles, but is a good road. If more people took this road, effects would be noticed immediately.

/ G probably supports a decision influenced by idealism rather than by materialism. With this judgment, I concurred. /

V. Gets in touch with aspects of one's unconsciousness (the real self)

While the reading journal does not readily yield opportunities for the real self to surface, the unstructured journal does afford and encourage the freedom and independence to probe the journalist's nether self.

Daydreams and strong preferences provide indicators concerning interior nature and the real self that will be dealt with through other journal forms as those used for creative writing both in and out of class.

VI. Builds confidence in self-expression

Journal #5

Throughout E's journal, the evaluator noted numerous mechanical errors, but E's ideas were direct, clear, and penetrating, disclosing positive values. Her final two entries, except for punctuation and spelling contained no mechanical faults.

9/17/'79 From Working Woman, E records:

> Whatever the scene, enter in a business type apparel. Its appropriate anywhere....
> You should always be ready for anything. Ofice work can be hecktic and for that first impression don't fall apart.

/ Evaluator's comment: Sound advice /

9/18/'79 Blue Russell a novel about a slave

> ... The story was made out of paper, ink, and glue. You read the paper with ink, and your eyes and feelings stuck to it like glue.

/ Evaluator's comment: You have much empathy and are a sensitive person. I've enjoyed reading your journal. Your responses are refreshing and quite expressive. /

VII. Provides a permanent record of improvement

Journal #1

In the first six entries A had difficulty expressing an attitude, response, or feeling, as a reaction to the article he had read; however, for most of the remaining entries, he voices a direct response. Such marked improvement may have resulted from class interaction at which time students were encouraged to read any entries from their journals that each did not consider too private or confidential. Sometimes students are encouraged to read aloud so that the entire class may hear their language fluency and observe their critical stance.

Journal #4

In ten of the fourteen entries, D had difficulty expressing a reader's response to the selection as a part of his topic sentence; however, his closing comments along with some revised sentences show improved versions.

9/6/'79 As the title says, this article is about the first charter, non-stop flight to China being offered. ...

This is really great, and if I had the money I would love to attend this tour.

Revised: A first charter, non-stop flight to China sounds like a good idea; now one is being offered.

9/9/'79 One February day the longest kidnapping case in Latin America occurred. ...

... I believe Niehaus was very lucky to ever return home. It is a funny thing that he wasn't even hurt the slightest bit.

Revised: I hate to even think of kidnappings, but one day in February...

9/10/'79 Exactly one year ago Gladys Bonanus was sipping coffee at the kitchen window.

...

Its too bad that something like that had to happen, but I wish I was there to see it.

Revised: I've always seen movies of what air crashes looked like, but Gladys Bonanus witnessed the worst aircrash in the U.S.

VIII. Develops reflection

Journal #5

As a response E asks a question.

9/7/'79 If a mother wants to work, will it be more profitable for her to work or stay at home with her young children?

...

/ Student wrote two pages analyzing the article about choosing a day care center. /

When you've found the right one then you can feel better about leaving your child. Remember a small child really needs a lot of guidance, or he'll grow up as a confused child.

E responds to article titled "Walking Ads" in the New York Times.

9/9/'79 Why do you where T-shirts, pants, jewelry, jackets, hats, etc. with advertising on them? Is it to make others jealous? ...

I suppose it will always be that way. So as long as people want something just because others have it, people will be wearing ads. They'll even buy stranger things just to top the others.

/ Evaluator's comments: Are they seeking status or

prestige? Do they feel alienated or insecure? /

E writes:

9/13/'79 You need your vitamins, but which ones, how many, and from what sources? ...

People are always taking pills for something. Even if they really don't need them. We should go back in time and take things only when absolutely needed. We'd probably be more healthy.

/ Evaluator: I agree. /

9/16/'79 Alice was a young girl going through the hard stages of life. She was around 14 and wondering where her place in life actually was. ... /

/ Drugs, crime, prostitution, and similar topics were mentioned. /

This story really kept you on the edge of your seat. It was a good book to get into. It made you feel like you were a friend or someone who knew her. A very good book.

In several articles that G read, some fundamental issues challenging society's values are considered.

For his twelfth entry, G responds to a sex club article, concluding:

9/22/'79 A step by step regression is taking place that can only result in our worst fears and they are today's realities.

Rape, homosexuality, and abortion are all products of a sexually permisive age. These are not new problems but are surely much more important in their effects on us as a society. We reach for something to grab onto for support while the country sinks in a whirlpool of decadence and disaster.

G seems willing to grapple with unresolved issues. Others that he has pondered in his journal include the "Krishna religion and their tactics"; employment agencies for hire; helium an energy alternative; Cuba's political and economic "disaster."

While allowing him to articulate his viewpoints, journal writing permits him to re-examine his ideas as he composes his responses.

Alan Kay, in his study, concedes that "what the reader brought to literature was either de-emphasized or ignored." (1977, p. 3) Quite to the contrary, here in the reading journal since each student chooses her/his own materials, each derives personal pride and satisfaction when given time to reflect and to respond. Each journalist, drawing upon her/

his own thoughts, uses an expressive voice with which to create meaning.

IX. Identifies preferences and desires.

Journal #2

B's entries were exceptional in many ways; however, examining the sources of her articles Glamour, T. Brooks' The Sword of Shannara, an epic fantasy, the Smithsonian Architectural Digest, Arizona Highways, National Geographic, Scientific American, Art News, American Artist, and others, one notes that B has wide-ranging interests but principally she enjoys art. Rechecking her profile card, I note that she is studying art. Later, during a conference, she admitted that her parents had insisted on her reading Shakespeare to improve her style. For her final paper, she wrote on becoming an artist. Entries: 9/4 a novel; 9/6 architecture; 9/7 "Men, Myths and Rituals" among the Hopi Indians; 9/8 "Easter Greetings from the Ukranians" (decorative Easter eggs); 9/10 Art Designing at home; 9/11 "The Art Therapist; An Ambiguous Figure"; 9/13 "Gourds for Year-around Interest"; 9/14 Bagpipes.

X. Reconciles contraditions and ambiguities moving toward complexity

Journal #4

For his topic sentence D wrote a detailed involved statement that avoided any personal response to the article.

9/15 Revised: I have forged peoples' names just for fun, but two women were seized and charged for forgery counts at a nearby bank. ... This is typical of St. Louis. Unless the girls were very good, they should have never gotten away with it the first time.

D recognizes legal violations; he registers too from past reading the widespread tendency to circumvent enforcing laws. D concedes that some extenuating circumstances may have intervened.

D voices an opinion concerning a common societal problem--the aging.

9/16 Families should not feel guilty about putting an aging relative in a nursing home. ...
This is not the way it would be for me, I would feel very guilty if I put my mother or father in a nursing home.

/ Evaluator recorded: I share your feelings here. /

When an instructor can express genuine agreement with a student's response, a recorded comment can provide support, moving student and instructor toward a point of understanding through shared responses.

D records:

9/20 Only one of five of the seventeen million Americans who tried to quit smoking last year succeeded. These are statistics from the National Center for Health. Blacks and women are the least successful in kicking the habit.
I didn't realize that stopping the smoking habit would be so tough for people, but I do realize that my mother tried a year ago and couldn't.

/ Evaluator made no comment but recommended that the first sentence be reworded to show a reader's response. /

XI. Creates tool for synthesizing school with life.

Journal #7

In some entries G, like many students, had difficulty expressing a reader's response in his opening sentence. For entry 6, G chose a nonfiction work assigned in another course. He begins:

After having read this paperback for a class in advertizing, I am left in shock and resentment of the grandiosity and sublime nature of advertizing's tactics in America.....

There are many other techniques used in the ad game but it all adds up to one thing, blind misconception.

Our purchasing power is controlled by the corporations responsible for these ads and that's a lot of influence to have over a lot of people. Drastic changes in this area are needed to insure diplomatic ends to these means.

/ G's precise meaning is not clear. It is apparent that the journal encourages the student to reflect on phenomena that another subject field has covered and allows him to re-examine issues to determine what next steps should be. Often students are so involved with mastering diverse subjects that they lack time to interrelate facts, ideas, theories, concepts, and strategies. For G the journal is helping him contemplate linking cognitive and affective learning with real life. /

Journal writing serves as an integrative instrument in stimulating writing across the curriculum and, particularly, as an effective tool for writing courses as well as for interdisciplinary studies.

XII. Provides springboard for the complete composing process.

Students, reading and writing daily for enjoyment as well as knowledge, often perceive and practice effective writing techniques.

Journal #12

J's journal provides her with a foundation since she has become aware of what she likes and why she likes a particular writing piece. J records:

> I liked this article because it was interesting and personal. Facts given in the past were put together well so as not to bore the reader. The second half gives a personal touch in which the reader can feel what the / working / mothers are going through / creating crazy times in which to enjoy their children./

Several of J's entries identify organizing patterns: chronology spatial, cause-effect, and others, thus showing her responsiveness to form as well as to ideas.

Conclusion

Because journal writing encourages the student to think, perceive, write, react, and interact, it is an effective instrument leading to self-awareness and thereby broadens the total writing experience.

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH COMPOSITION

READING JOURNAL ASSIGNMENT

WRITTEN: Keep a reading journal for fourteen days (fourteen separate entries)

STUDENT'S CHOICE: You may read either newspaper, or magazine articles, or a short story, or poems, or parts of a longer work on any topic(s) that may interest you. (Avoid announcements and items having less than 750 words, except poems).

1. Document your reading.
   Give title, author, date, source, page numbers, and other necessary data. Study Handbook for appropriate form and suitable punctuation.

2. Write a short summary paragraph--about five sentences.
   Begin with a topic sentence that makes a general pertinent statement about your reading and also expresses your point of view and/or attitude.

3. Close with a judgment: (a) an insight, (b) a question, or (c) criticism--about three sentences.

PURPOSE: To stimulate and to expand your reading interests.

To develop precision in reading.

To encourage critical thinking.

To develop skill in extracting key ideas from reading materials.

To develop skill in clear, purposeful writing.

To develop a free flowing style that communicates your viewpoint.

Submit your reading journal during the fourth week.

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